

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 28, 2006

PRESENT: Shawn Costello, James Gage, Walter Moody (Walter Moody was present, but was not sworn in so he was not seated and did not vote on any business), Jesse Amsel, Glenn Eberly and George Nickerson

ABSENT: David Hurley

STAFF

PRESENT: Rob Phillips, Town Planner and Reanna Goodreau, Recording Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Costello called the Ellington Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE

III. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion: Selling Porter Road properties obtained with DEP grant to the State of CT in order for them to be added to the Shenipsit State Forest

Commissioner Gage stated that Peter Charter, Board of Selectmen member, requested that he contact the State to see if they would be interested in purchasing the open space properties the Town has recently purchased along Porter Road. First Selectman Stupinski and Commissioner Gage met with representatives from the State to discuss the feasibility of the State purchasing the properties. First Selectman Stupinski has received a letter from the State that they are interested in purchasing the lands in order to increase the Shenipsit State Forest. Commissioner Gage explained that the advantages of selling these properties include the Town receiving money to purchase additional open space parcels, the Town would not have stewardship responsibilities for these properties and the Town would receive a minor amount of money in lieu of the State paying taxes for the forest lands. By consensus, the commission agreed it was a benefit to the Town if the State bought the Porter Road properties to add to the Shenipsit State Forest.

CONTINUED TO THE APRIL 25, 2006 MEETING.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Review of the Draft Plan of Conservation (formerly known as the Open Space Plan)

Commissioner Gage presented his idea of how the focus areas should be portrayed on the map for the Plan of Conservation. He explained that he believes there should be four distinct areas, which would include a farm belt, the Shenipsit State Forest and Lake, the Willimantic River Greenway and the Hockanum River. The commission debated if the map should show distinct areas represented by lines along roads and properties or if it should show basic areas represented by a bubble. The consensus was to represent the areas by lines and that there should be an additional area around Crystal Lake.

The commission also discussed Commissioner Gage's draft Plan of Conservation. It was decided that the members would review the draft and email comments to each other a week prior to the April meeting in order to facilitate a discussion at the April. It is the intent of the commission to finalize the Plan of Conservation at the April meeting.

MOVED (AMSEL), SECONDED (GAGE) AND PASSED (NAYS: NICKERSON & COSTELLO) TO USE THE LINE METHOD OF DELINEATING THE FOCUS AREAS IN THE "AREAS OF CONSERVATION INTEREST" MAP.

MOVED (EBERLY), SECONDED (AMSEL) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING TITLES FOR EACH FOCUS AREA IN THE "AREAS OF CONSERVATION INTEREST": 1) FARM BELT, 2) SHENIPSIT FOREST & LAKE, 3) HOCKANUM RIVER AREA, 4) CRYSTAL LAKE WATERSHED AREA & 5) EASTERN PANHANDLE & WILLIMANTIC RIVER GREENWAY.

CONTINUED TO THE APRIL 25, 2006 MEETING.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes:
 - a. January 31, 2006 Meeting Minutes

MOVED (AMSEL), SECONDED (GAGE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 31, 2006 MEETING MINUTES.

- b. February 28, 2006 Meeting Minutes

MOVED (AMSEL), SECONDED (NICKERSON) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 28, 2006 MEETING MINUTES WITH THE FOLLOWING CORRECTION: PAGE 1, ADD "REPRESENTATIVE GRAZIANI" TO THE LIST OF "ALSO PRESENT".

2. Correspondence:
 - a. Letter to Shawn Costello from Doug Smith, dated 3/2/06 (Hockanum River Linear Park)

- b. Memo to BOS from Rob Phillips, dated 3/6/06 (Permanent Appointment of ZEO/IW Agent—Lisa Houlihan)
- c. Willimantic River Greenway Day email, dated 3/5/06
- d. Willimantic River Cleanup email, dated 3/5/06
- e. Landmark, February 2006

SO NOTED.

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (AMSEL), SECONDED (EBERLY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Reanna Goodreau
Recording Secretary